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# RESURRECTION OF THE GODS

—  
DON A. MICKLESON



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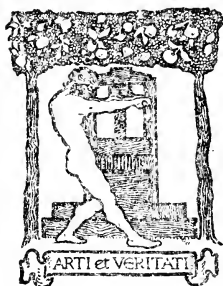




# RESURRECTION OF THE GODS

BY

DON A. MICKLESON



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## RESURRECTION OF THE GODS



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A flight of birds of varied form  
Perched themselves upon a tree—  
No doubt they thought themselves alone  
Or they wouldn't have spoken as they did near me.

Paralyzed, dumb and stricken with awe  
I stood in my tunnel and gazed at them  
For they were birds against nature's law,  
Having the voices and words of men.

I'd been delving the earth in search of wealth  
Far within a desert land—  
The birds came there as if in stealth,  
That queer, uncanny, feathered band.

I judged it thus from their actions, sly  
And the caution, they had in speaking,  
They looked about both low and high—  
I thought at first they were sneaking,—

Sneaking about to fill their gizzards  
With tempting bait from near the tree—  
Squirrels, perhaps, or maybe lizzards  
Then (evil omen) I feared 'twas me.

For there, in converse with that bevy of fowl,  
Blackbird and swan, eagle and crane,  
Sat a bird of fate,—a great old owl,—  
Wondered I much whence they came.

Now, the fates decree by omens and signs  
When ill betides,—to those who are wise

The same today as in olden times  
And to know them, is easy, for he who tries.

So beholding there that bird of evil  
That mocks at some where 'er they roam,  
I concluded that he was sent by the devil  
To supervise stripping me flesh from bone.

But, great my relief when at length the crane  
Began to speak of their mission's aim  
And intently I listened for him to explain,—  
Hoping he'd state when they'd leave again.

"Friends," he murmured, in accents low,  
"In form of birds do we assemble here  
Lest man may see and learn and know  
There lives yet the gods they've ceased to fear."

"In this guise we must seek one  
Whose heart is free to accept the truth  
And carry the tidings to every one  
Assembled here upon the earth."

I, standing there with pick and shovel,  
Hidden within my hidden tunnel,  
Was filled with amazement, fear and fright—  
Realizing, at length, that within my sight  
Was a legion of gods from a world unknown  
From whence, as birds, they must have flown.  
Their object, no doubt, to rule the earth  
As they ruled it before the Christian birth.

I thought me then of times of yore  
When the Christ and gods, as never before,  
Sought to save the souls of men  
Who prayed for someone to save for them.

Be it Christ or gods or norns or elves,  
The souls—they must needs save themselves,  
And, concerning which, they'd dream and hope  
And yet in darkness of it, grope.

Rudely was my reverie broken  
By the words of an eagle, spoken.  
His voice, like distant thunder boomed;  
My fate, I feared, was sealed and doomed.  
Such tremors strange, unseemly, queer  
Shook the world,—as I, with fear—  
Affrighted I and mutely wondered  
Whose his words that thusly thundered?  
Who could this in shape of bird be  
Whose tones, in truth, were quite unworldly?  
At length, condemned I much my blindness,  
When noting with what truth and kindness  
This god spoke of earth and heaven,  
How illy man of the good, then given  
Made it serve the end intended  
And long ere he, his speech had ended  
Knew I that the great Thor spoke—  
God of storm and thunder bolt.

“Our great god Odin, permit me to state—  
Ye Gods of all from prison freed—  
Has wisely spoken of the pitiful state  
Of mankind now, and their awful need.”

“The rulers of men need judges for them—  
’Tis plain that they have gone astray  
From the path intended for them.  
Fools! Such fools! Have they wandered away.  
Why is it thus? Why thus, ye gods?  
What cause brings such calamity?  
Canst comprehend, ye gods  
Why thus such fools,—humanity?”

“Since driven from earth by fate’s decree  
And losing all power o’er the fates of men  
Tis a sad return, as viewed by we,  
To behold the tardy progression of men.  
Truly doth it appear as when  
Hermod, in hell, our Balder found  
When men and gods and mountains and plain  
Wept with grief and shook with fright—  
When tears were shed like ceaseless rain  
At losing him, the god of light.”

“For behold! Where is the joy today?  
’Tis dead, I ween, all dead from strife;  
Mirth is sung in a mirthless lay,  
Men do not live,—they have but life.”

“In place of we gods, hath a great divinity  
Worshipped by all mankind for ages—  
Ruled the world as did Odin, Vile and Ve;  
That trinity of gods, first known to sages.”

“And whence there sprang this queer religion  
Devoid of beauty, with greed its fetish



That's made men slaves legion by legion  
Since fate, from earth, we gods did banish."

"But mine eye of prophetic vision  
Beholds a dawn upon the earth—  
A dawn that's held by men in derision  
Being taught it folly, (since the Christian birth).

"All hail the day when once again  
The brave and true alone appears  
At banquets where we gods shall reign  
And drink from goblets of Freyja's tears."

"'Tis indeed as 'twas before  
We from earth were banished  
Some are glutted with their store  
While some are truly famished."

"'Tis strange indeed that we should find,  
After ages of that fatal sway  
That severed communion, with us, mankind,  
To find the evils the same today."

"But such is fate, by fate's decree  
This Christian rule is doomed,  
We gods again shall truly be  
By mankind with victory plumed."

"Beauty once again shall rule,  
Freyja will be honored.  
All again, to we gods shall pray  
The wise, as the untutored."

So spoke Thor, the god of thunder,  
Listed I, with awe and wonder,  
Hearing thus, an eagle speak  
In truth to me seemed such a freak,

That I questioned if my reason  
Had not indeed committed treason  
And left me there an empty shell  
Like a vagabond escaped from hell,

Devoid of means of knowing truly  
Had my mind become unruly,  
Yet I knew they spoke like sages  
If perchance through all the ages,

As there, before me, they did confess,  
The fates afforded them redress  
From a bondage that grieved them sorely  
In narrow realms devoid of glory,

Whence again, they might, their valor try  
And win allegiance for aye and aye  
From man, who once served them well—  
Till, vainglorious—they sipped of hell,

From arrogance quite unbearable  
Thinking they as gods unconquerable.  
Their punishment was most justly given  
By the fates ruling earth and heaven.

\* \* \* \*

I was a-weary after a day of toil  
Yet hoped that, with silence, I might not spoil  
The novel experience of hearing birds speak,—  
Each of a kind,—with a different beak.

Tho I feared I was crazy and dreaming for sure  
'Twas quite beyond me to pass by such a lure,  
So silently discarding my shovel and pick  
Laying them down without the least click,

I attempted to seat myself on a barrow  
(The one I used in working my burrow)  
Tho huge in form, with a monstrous frame  
I'd sat on my barrow again and again

And always it bore my weight without murmur,  
'Twas firm as a rock and I thought a bit firmer,  
All made of steel, both hard and tough  
And meant to withstand hard usage and rough.

But nevertheless tho I sat down with ease  
It smashed with a crash, a moan and a wheeze.  
For a moment, in anger, I hotly cursed  
When, in flocked the birds, the great owl first.

Now, thought I, they'll devour me alive  
Like hornets feasting at a honeybee hive—  
For a moment they stood as if undecided,  
I, in terror, their onslaught bided.

However, soon, in marched a swan  
Her plumage shining as silvery dawn

With queenly tread she made approach  
And with tender voice most sweetly spoke,—

*Freyja*

“Fear not, sir mortal. Why should'st thou  
shudder?  
Why tremble thus? Why for thy reason fear?  
Know ye not the gods commit no murder,  
And without good reason cause not a tear?

Think ye then we knew not of your presence,  
Tho. with caution, thou attemptedst to attain  
Wisdom, with which to win worldly prominence  
From the words of gods unknown to them—O  
shame!

A shame in truth, that thou should'st give  
So little credence to the powers of divinities  
And think that so near their presence thou  
coulds't live  
Except 'twere considered by them an expediency.

Sir, thou hast heard our conversation,  
As 'twas willed by we you should  
For 'tis necessary, we in consultation,  
(For sake of mankind's good)

A Mortal being devoid of prejudice  
Find, to act as earthly herald  
And disseminate, without cowardice,  
To all who dwell upon this world

Those tidings which must needs concern  
Every dweller upon the earth,  
Those tidings anent the gods' return  
Their resurrection,—their second birth.

I, dear sir, am Freyja—goddess next to none  
Goddess I, of love and every brilliant passion  
And, as the worlds are lighted by the rays of the  
sun,  
I, the hearts of men enlighten,—in like fashion."

Freyja for a moment, inquisitively, me regarded  
I tried in vain to answer her,—fright my speech  
retarded  
Until at length sweet Freyja, found for me com-  
passion  
And changed herself into a nymph to arouse me  
to some passion.

Her wiles succeeded beyond her hopes, of that I'm  
sure truly,  
My tongue at once unloosed itself and became,  
indeed, unruly.  
I met her gaze with candor and scanned her face  
of beauty;  
"Of all the treasures upon earth,—I'd give quite  
free of duty,

For just one kiss, one love embrace—just a  
moment's rapture  
Give all freely, my soul included, if in my arms  
could capture

Such entrancing winning grace, such glorious  
loveliness

"'Twould make my heart be quite content and  
extradite all loneliness."

Such words I spoke and more, quite aflame with  
ardor

Until visions of possession, my heart began to  
harbor.

And reaching then to clasp the lovely, lovely  
vision

I clasped alone thin, thin air and met Freyja's  
mild derision.

And instead of a nymph of entrancing form

Stood Freyja now in garb of swan

Tho such creature is to love repellent

Her eyes, with humor, gleamed so excellent

That chagrin and anger, with kind good grace

Took speedy flight from my flushed face

While humor, blessed mood contagious,

Contracted I, from that of Freyja's.

Then kindly did she me reproach

For the audacity to thus approach

A being quite too divine

To be embraced by person, mean as mine.

"Forgive me Freyja," with her I pleaded

"But surely thou must truly know

Results of deeds are all unheeded  
At times, by mortals here below.

When love is aroused by beauty divine—  
Pray tell me, Freyja, it is no sin  
That man may hope to all entwine  
Such beauty rare, his arms within.

Truly then 'twere little wonder  
That man with woman's wont to blunder  
When Freyja, love's most charming goddess  
Such wiles entrancing does countenance."

*The Pheasant*

"In thine ignorance, do not chide  
Thou foolish mortal, lest ill betide."  
Spoke a bird with brilliance vested  
While with wing outstretched it gestured  
Its voice with anger fraught.

"Know ye not the norns of evil  
Require of each and every mortal  
A payment in tears or anguish of soul  
For the greatest joys from young and old?  
And all that's good is dearly bought."

*Mortal*

"Thy words indeed cannot be doubted  
And often here I hear them quoted  
Yet the reason,—would I fain

That thou, a god, to me explain.  
Why is that that's best for mortal  
Subject is and unto evil  
Must a tribute to it pay?"

*The Pheasant*

"That that's best for mortal creature  
Is to him a perfect stranger  
Naught he knows, the laws concerning,  
Subject he to vulgar yearning,  
Reason is to him unknown  
Harmony's laws and they alone  
Protect all things from evil's sway."

I think that Freyja was inclined  
To think this god with superior mind  
Would cause that I, myself, entangle  
With problems that must end in wrangle  
And so to stop the useless speaking  
Explained,—“The truth of my seeking  
Were better made known another day.”

So powerful in its sweetness  
Was the voice with which she spoke  
E'en the gods showed some meekness  
And as if in slavery's yoke  
In unison bowed they, each and all  
Those birds—yet, gods, both great and small  
And with eagerness awaited what Freyja had to  
say.



She then outlined to me the plan  
By which, unto my fellowman  
I'd prove myself of service great  
In making known the rules of fate.  
"For," said she, "'Tis meet that man  
Learn to live his earthly span  
According as the stars may say.

And he who grieves o'er tasks undone or heeds  
To murmur o'er his or others good or evil deeds  
Must pay the price of being left  
In a darkened world,—of light bereft  
Until the time so lost in fruitlessness  
Is doubly spent in grieving penitence  
At the night, now his, which should be day.

And this in part is our earthly mission,—  
Each god or goddess controls one passion  
And thus shall we attempt to teach  
That man may love us, all and each.  
Tho, loving one more than all the rest,  
Shall he by that one be most blest  
No prayer of his be answered—nay."

### *Mortal*

Ah! then Freyja—goddess of the passion supreme  
Tell me: wilt thou, when once more you reign,  
Inspire the hearts of women with that love divine  
That in days of yore—, as if drunk with wine—  
The hearts of kings and noblest lords  
Thrilled with joy when at their boards

Lovely women smiled their pleasure  
And asking aught in slightest measure  
Were granted all their hearts desire  
E'en tho their lord must brave hell-fire?

Wilt thou, Freyja, beauteous soul divine  
Lend thine aid, lest hearts repine  
And die loveless for lack of nurture  
And kindly aid from thou, the teacher.  
Doubt I not your power, for, had it been less  
How, throughout all the centuries  
Could'st thine teachings be remembered?  
For even today rare love is rendered.

Yet I fear me 'tis on the wane  
For lover oft is called insane  
By women, who their suit disdain  
Unless perchance by right they claim  
That which gilds all hearts today  
And brands e'en brutes as of superior clay.  
Riches, Freyja, or likewise their dearth  
Hath near replaced thy power on earth  
Or submerged it in a depth of sin  
To satisfy vainglorious whim."

*Freyja*

Sir, I thank thee. But a mortal  
Thy kind words I shall heed.  
In truth, my heart, as tho 'twere mortal  
In anguish does most truly bleed  
To know that that most priceless treasure

Bequeathed by me to lovely woman  
Is now replaced by meaner pleasure  
And does not mold their hearts, or govern.  
Tell me more of thy knowledge, pray.  
What the cause? Why this decline?—  
Riches, thou sayest, doth replace today  
Passionate love—divinest of all things divine?

*Mortal*

Freyja, thy pardon do I humbly seek,  
But ere I can with ardor speak  
I pray thee, change thy unseemly garb.  
In truth I find the task too hard  
Trying thus my speech upon  
That which seems to me a swan.  
Truly, Freyja, thou dost not fear  
To me, in human form appear?  
And then, indeed thou would'st embolden  
Me, perchance to words quite golden.  
Words, I trust, might cheer and charm thee  
And, knowest thou, I could not harm thee.  
There's a vision now within my mind  
Concerning the beauty that must be thine  
And could I, Freyja, a moment view it,  
Tho death reward me I should not rue it.

*Freyja*

“Thou, a gallant art in truth  
But list thee sir, lend thine ear,  
’Twould ill become one of thy youth

To suffer the curse thou now shalt hear.—  
In ages gone, when last I reigned,  
A mortal, who, with me in converse,  
Who, my counsel quite disdained,  
Bade me appear and pronounce my curse,  
A curse more terrible, he found to bear  
Than the curse upon the wandering Jew  
A curse, dear sir, that you should fear  
As the worst the fates could proffer you.

\* \* \* \*

### *The Curse*

“He who looks on Freyja’s form  
In torment on this earth shall dwell  
For aye and aye shall that one mourn  
As does a soul that’s lost in hell.  
For ages and ages shall he roam the earth  
Seeking for that that’s not for him,—  
Seeking from those of noble birth  
And from those that are born in sin  
A kindly word from a woman kind,  
A glance, with love, for himself alone.  
Finding it not, ’twill torment his mind,  
Thus accursed shall he roam and roam.”

### *Mortal*

“Tho disciple am I of Freyja’s  
My heart is not enough courageous  
Thy curse to attempt enduring

How-so-e'er its cause be so alluring  
For a life of shortest term  
Knows how anguish,—the heart can burn,  
Knows the heart to ashes turns  
When unslaked it yearns and yearns—  
Yearns for that it can't attain  
As does for freedom—he in chain  
And since thy face I cannot gaze upon  
Except as nymph or in form of swan  
My words, I fear me, may seem cold  
For I may speak, not of love, but gold.  
Gold it is O Freyja, goddess thou of love,  
Gold replaces all things—even the gods above.  
Gold will melt the hearts of misses  
For gold, the youth, old woman kisses.  
Naught else on earth could make them do it  
Tho know they well for life they'll rue it."

*The Eagle*

"Hearest thou, ye gods, what says this earthly  
man?  
Does not his words demand that we more hastily  
plan?"

*The Raven*

"Aye! with this, his confirmation. Let us dis-  
cover more—  
Whence this abomination that makes our heart  
so grievous sore."

*The Pheasant*

“E’en the Christ, a greater god than we,  
Hath proven the futility  
Of battle against that sorcerer—  
That scourging, unscrupulous monster—  
Who, with satan and all his devils  
For amusement in their revels—  
Play with the meaner passions of men  
And gleefully applaud as they subject them  
To sacrifice on mammon’s throne  
That, by right, we gods should own.”

*Freyja*

“What wilt thou then—  
Shall not we now disperse,  
Explore at once the lives of men  
And show this mortal the universe?”

*The Eagle*

“Freyja thou hast spoken well—  
Each god unto his labor go  
Hasten the time when man shall dwell  
And commune with gods as of long ago.”

*Freyja*

“Mortal,” spoke sweet Freyja, with her golden  
ringing voice  
“Desirest thou to visit, and with other gods con-  
verse,

Seekest thou that knowledge granted no other  
man,  
Would'st thou see the homes of gods, and Pluto's  
shores scan?

*Mortal*

“If thou wilt aid me, the swift Pegasus to ride  
And with me, in thy splendor, to realms unknown  
be guide  
Whilst thus thy realms, engaged surveying—  
I pledge myself quite all obeying.

Follow thee I will for ages,  
Trusting thus to meet the sages  
Who, their knowledge, did disperse  
So scant throughout the universe.  
And gain, from souls whose eyes have scanned  
The worlds of gods as the world of man  
Some gleam of light  
To pierce the night  
So all enveloping  
Man—just developing.”

*Freyja*

“Come! Mount ye then Pegasus,  
Steed of quaintest fancy  
On him sail the universe  
And behold the sights entrancing.  
But ere that steed thou mayest mount  
Your soul from body must depart.

No dross as it may soar aloft  
To realms wherein it hath no part."

*Mortal*

"Freyja, Let me then away  
A soul on earth today  
Does but the body hamper  
And to it is a damper  
Quenching all the fires  
Of mortal's mean desires,  
The which must burn on earth  
Or prove the victim since his birth  
Unfitted for the strife  
Through all his life  
To win the laurels oft bequeathed  
To those of meaner worth."

*The Flight to Nether World*

Quite then, on the instant  
My soul was wafted high.  
(Surely it was pleasant  
Thus for one to die.)  
Through such a space we journeyed,  
Quite beyond a mortal's conception—  
And when at last it was ended  
Met we a strange reception.  
We stood on a world of chaos—  
Beside us, he who ruled.  
A feast was spread before us  
Which was, to me, unschooled,



A strange o'er-solid substance  
For gods and mortal spirits,  
Requiring for their sustenance  
Naught that a mortal merits—

For there before us were savory meats  
Of various earthly creatures  
But high above were placed our seats  
The food quite beyond our reaching.  
The god of chaos made a fire  
While we a seat, each mounted.  
He stacked the food up high—yet higher  
And with spices did anoint it.  
Beneath the meat and bread and wine  
He placed a furnace, blazing—  
The odors were so rare, so fine  
And to my soul so bracing  
That, then I comprehended  
Why the gods did all require  
Their food with spices blended  
And sent to them by fire.

*Chaos*

“Our mission now to the human race  
Is to teach to them the glories that may be theirs.  
We gods once dwelt upon the world's face  
And one achieved his godship there.  
Seek ye into history. The record still is found.  
I speak of he called Agamemnon, whose valor none  
may doubt,

His bones, with greatest care, were covered in a mound

In the land called 'Mycenae,' where e'en now they are found out.

Know ye well the ills of men  
And the miseries that are theirs  
How love supreme's unknown to them  
And they're weighted down with care.

Their minds so sordid, do but dwell  
On things that do their souls ensnare  
For even the imps who dwell in hell  
For such sordid things do never care.

Thy teachers teach unto all mankind  
Of ways to peace that are brutal  
For to the paths of peace, all are blind  
And their teachings foolish and futile.  
For do not they, with words of praise  
Bless the poor and wretched  
Telling them of the future days  
When, by God, they'll be protected?  
They tell them of the gold in store  
And the palaces built for them  
But forget to tell that nevermore  
Will they require either bread or gem.  
The while they line their clothes with silk  
And drink of the best of wine—  
The most of their wealth from the poor filch  
Yet call themselves divine."

*Mortal*

“Surely Chaos, if that’s thy name,  
A god, as thou, must surely know  
I’m seeking not such preachments lame  
But long for greater things to know.”

So I spoke, my temper rising,  
'Twas quite beyond all my surmising  
That a god, could thus indulge  
Such vagrant news—no greater wit divulge.

“We mortals know, and have for ages  
That what you say is true,  
But seek I now to learn of sages  
And gods of wisdom, as are you—  
Whence we came—I’d solve the question  
Concerning man and all creatures’ birth.  
If made by God in all perfection  
And sent by Him to rule the earth,  
Did men to depths so low, so mean  
Fall from their exalted place  
That all semblance of Godly mien  
Was eradicated from their face?  
Was it thus?—Do not facts reveal  
That man arose from bestial haunts  
And through ages of woe and weal  
Achieve that face he flouts  
Proclaiming it the work of God?  
Truly then ’twere tedious, slow  
And, to me, the process odd  
That one so mighty should such pace, go.”

*Chaos*

“That thou seekest thou canst not know  
Until allegiance dost thou sever  
With that earth so far below  
Tho thou seekest ever and ever.”

*Freyja*

“Hark thee, Chaos, ('tis a mission)  
The gods assembled have ordained  
That this mortal gain admission  
To our realms and thus explain  
To fellow-creatures on the earth  
Why the gods of ancient lore  
Were at time of the great Christ's birth  
Condemned by man forevermore.”

*Chaos*

“ 'Tis well, perhaps then, with discretion,  
That thou viewest for a time  
The beginning, yet not the completion  
Of the works so called divine.”  
Saying which; from Freyja, we parted  
While I, by Chaos, was escorted  
To a point from whence could we view the passing  
Of myriads of sparks and meteors flashing  
And fragments of earth and iron and stone  
From which was Chaos building a home.  
By a force of attraction I could not comprehend  
When reaching a point did the fragments descend

And attach themselves like clusters of bees  
Swarming the air and alighting on trees—  
Attach themselves near where we stood  
I, a-watching in panic mood.  
For here was a mountain growing higher and  
higher  
Being builded of earth and iron and fire  
Which quaked and hissed and seethed and roared  
And moaned and groaned as 'twere hell's horde.  
From whence we viewed a lake of slime  
Of which he'd mentioned at a prior time,  
And therein writhed a monster shape  
Neither fish, mammal, bird or snake  
But a writhing mass of minutest creatures  
Devoid of form or head or features.  
A mass that struggled and writhed and swarmed  
Struggled against cold or being too warm  
While some,—cementing with slime and scum  
Was the nucleus of skin, for the mass begun.  
Each chilly breath or warmer blast  
Kept changing a part of the slimy mass  
Until,—by Chaos was I informed—  
A skin about the whole was formed  
And then the battle ensued inside  
Those creatures next the monster's hide  
Adhered to it and furnished  
That by which it could be nourished.  
Thus the skin was kept alive  
And just within it did there thrive  
Another casing that must needs  
Upon its fellows—inward—feed.  
So the mass at last compact

Became a monster in name and fact.  
At first would just an opening be  
Nor head, nor eye, nor limb have he  
And feed itself on slime and moss  
Until with one it met with loss.  
Thence other means must Chaos supply—  
Whereby the monster may not die—  
Mayhap an eye or something akin  
A sensitive spot upon the skin—  
And so on thus develop for ages  
Wiser growing at successive stages.  
Small or great, they grow indeed  
As best befits their every need.”

\* \* \* \*

Now that I knew whence the creation of brutes  
Sought I to learn beyond all disputes  
If the source could be the same  
For the immortal spirits of men.  
So I insisted that Chaos should tell me  
And tho he frowned at me most severely  
At last condescended to me, to explain  
How first did man a spirit attain.

*Chaos*

“When men were but brutes and could not converse  
Naught of the spirit controlling the universe  
Possessed he then more than apes do today  
For know ye,—two forces are extant alway.

One is creative and by man called good  
The other destructive and for evil has stood.  
Contend they each against the other  
At times one wins, at times the other.

And when the first ape man, spoke his first word  
He called the good force and the good force heard.  
He partook in that instant of the force creative—  
The first soul was born to the first hairy native.

After ages and ages of soul cultivation  
Ages and ages before civilization  
A soul was born that outshone the rest  
And spoke to a man in the flesh yet dressed,

The man sorely fearful told his tribe—  
A council was called to name and decide  
What it could be,—this voice from the air  
And the council was of men who still wore hair.

And around a fire in a rock hewn cave  
In whispers and fearful, with faces grave  
Filled with wonder and perplexed full sore  
They pondered the question a month or more.

Finally deciding to call the name 'God,'  
The word was simple, their language too, hence  
nothing odd.  
When still more ages and ages passed by  
And more souls lived when their bodies would die

And members returned to speak to a friend  
Even yet mankind, could not comprehend  
Whence the origin of the ethereal spirits  
And called them all gods regardless of merits.

But some of those spirits with strength to return  
Came back to the earth because they did yearn  
To win themselves glory or some sort of praise.  
From man they had known in their earthly days.

And only succeeded in confusing their friends  
By odd demonstrations that none dared condemn.  
For only those souls that are great and yet meek  
Possess that power by which they may speak.

And of this latter class who progress and progress  
(From that source only) no greater, no less,  
Have all the gods who are known to men—  
From that source only did the gods all ascend.”

Curtly then did Chaos refuse  
More of his realm or works to disclose.  
Little I heeded the refusal, however  
For the sights I beheld could appeal to me never.  
And anxious was I to return once more  
To she who guided the way to the shore  
Of the world half built and growing,  
For she alone was worth the knowing  
Of all immortals thus far met  
In guise of bird either white or jet.  
Again I mounted old Pegasus,—  
Chaos drove two winged rodents—



Away we flew through ethereal vastness  
And worlds were passed in moments.  
Through space we fled to Urdur Font  
That place of meeting, high  
Where the gods of ancient days were wont  
Their laws to make and ply.  
While traveling thence, we rested  
At a place called, "Mimers Plain."  
And for a moment was I invested  
With the eyes of immortal and  
O, wondrous sights beheld I,  
With fearful apprehension  
Ghostly figures passing by  
Their numbers past comprehension.  
In the distance, I also saw  
The home of the gods of the south  
United now by solemn vow  
With the gods who rule the north.  
Chaos gave the pass word and but a moment were  
we retarded  
In passing o'er "Bi Frost" by G. safely guarded.  
At last we reached the banquet hall where Freyja  
had gone before us  
A place of lavish splendor, where sang an angel  
chorus.  
The place of tinted glass was made,  
The floor a crimson red,  
The walls were quite transparent,  
Blue, the tint o'erhead  
Wherein was mirrored scenes of present and of  
past  
Changing ever changing, each epoch grandly cast

Beyond all human power to describe by pen or  
brush

In nebulous waves, ethereal, the worlds passed  
in a rush.

They; the photogravers—concentrated in the sky  
Revealed in slightest detail events to the gods on  
high.

I, a mortal spirit, gazed thereon in rapture  
And beheld the deeds of valorous kings and other  
mortal creatures

When passed the stories of gods and of worlds  
there depicted

Those doubts to which I had ever been addicted  
Departed at once from my doubting soul  
When forced to review my own life's scroll.

For before me there, like an earthly "movie film"  
I viewed my life in the earthly realm,—  
The place wherein I first saw light  
And the deeds I'd done throughout my life.

Thereon was traced my every act  
And compelled me to face the unhappy fact  
That my life had been one full of shame  
Yet that which caused me the greater pain

Was the fact that I knew that my hosts knew well  
That my visiting place should have been in hell,  
And the pictures had proven, as all may perceive,  
The uselessness of trying, the gods to deceive.

The deeds of each and their actions all  
The vile, the good, the great, the small  
Were here, indelibly imprinted forever  
On waves ethereal, carried thither—  
And by that record, so the judges decide,  
Each mortal, by it, impartially tried.

While engaged these scenes reviewing  
Chaos returned and inquired if I  
Would join in the banquet of welcome  
Heralding Freyja's return to the sky.

The feast was truly a strange, strange sort  
Arranged upon a lengthy board  
Prepared, I learned, by Chaos' consort  
A sort of tea for her friendly horde—  
Thus to honor upon her visit  
That goddess from the earth returned—  
Who loved in manner so exquisite  
Is, throughout the universe of worlds.  
Instead of meats, and fruits of tree and vine  
Was the banquet board laden  
With ambrosial foods for gods divine  
And immortal glorious ladies  
Tho scant indeed the quantity  
The board with food supplied.  
'Twas of that strange quality  
That immortal life supplied.  
The dishes from gold were cast  
The purest ever known,  
The table of crystal glass  
With diamonds and rubies shone.

The food of daintiest flavor,  
Seasoned with rarest spices  
Called to each his neighbor's favor  
And resembled earthly ices.  
A single dish and a single spoon,  
A single goblet of nectar  
Was given to each—from the king of the moon—  
All down the line to Hector.  
In joyous mood the gods conversed  
And beamed upon some mistress,  
While I—myself quite secretly cursed—  
My eyes caused the distress;  
For brilliant wit there was galore  
And sweet the silvery laughter.  
But not a face could I see more  
Than I could see the laughter.

Chaos tried, indeed, to cheer me  
Freyja, too, was kind  
But mortal eyes yet were with me  
Sightless to forms divine.  
Dimly, tho, could I see outlined  
The ghostly figures near me  
As each one sipped his nectared wine  
Loved by them most dearly.

Freyja, now in garb, her own  
Her swanly garb discarded  
Was quaintly questioned of my home—  
With curious eyes was I regarded—  
For be it known, all gods were free  
But some were loth to leave

The home of their nativity  
Lest finding cause to grieve.

Hector, now ordained a god,  
(Hero of the Trojan war)  
Asked a question most truly odd  
And wished to know how far

'Twixt Greece and Crete  
Or if 'twere many leagues from Troy  
That first did Freyja meet  
A mortal whom she'd employ  
As dispenser of the tidings  
Concerning they, her mates.  
At last, loosed from hiding  
As decreed by the fates.

And Helen, too—her sins repented,  
And for whom great Hector fought;  
So charmed the gods that they relented,  
Those gods who 'gainst her wrought,  
With power great but useless—  
And now admitted to their halls  
The one time great adultress  
To adorn their board or lead at balls.  
She questioned Freyja concerning Greece  
And still was worldly vain  
She wished to know concerning feasts  
And if fashions were yet the same?

The feast at length was ended—  
The last allowed to me—

Because such food with souls so blended  
That three, made a divinity.  
So, at least, I was by Freyja told  
While our journey we continued,  
She now garbed as an eagle bold  
I, upon Pegasus pinioned.

We soared now to Jotenheim  
And viewed in giant land  
The giants:—rude as in olden times  
An uncouth monster band.

A moment sufficed for inspection  
Of a race of unlettered creatures  
Devoid of all godly perfection  
Weirdly strange in all their features.  
Their homes were still within great caves,  
Unshapely were their garments;  
Their food, they ate, with wooden staves,  
And often they ate "varmints."  
Passing thence we proceeded  
To where imprisoned spirits dwell,  
—All anguished cries of theirs unheeded,—  
That awful land called Hell.

There I saw a monster great,  
Like none I'd before beheld.  
'Twas labeled Love, but beamed with hate  
And 'gainst meeting it my soul rebelled.  
'Twas the personification (in form of snake)  
Of earthly monster known as Creed.  
There was Creed upon a throne

In those infernal regions  
And seemed, indeed, she quite at home  
Commanding slaves by legions.  
Worshiping there, that monster of slime,  
Were myriads of priests from every clime,—  
Priests who'd robbed poor widows gaily  
Of their tear stained copper pennies.  
Who, if perchance a penny fail them  
They'd at once condemn the many  
And tell them of that torrid region  
Where they are wont to go—  
Where satan, with his horrid legions  
In fiery pits, their souls would stow.

On earth their coats were of many hues  
Of costly silks and laces,  
Diamond studded were their shoes  
When appearing in public places.  
But now, alas! the clothes they wore,  
And must for ages yet,  
Look like unto some hardware  
Store's display advertisement.  
Of a million pennies all tied together  
That weigh a ton or two  
Their coats are made and will last forever  
Yet they pray to wear them through.

Tearful of eye and with tangled hair  
Were myriads and myriads of women, there  
Some sad eyed and tearful and moaning  
Hearts enhungered, praying and yearning  
While some of their sisters in woe

With hate and with anger aglow,  
Their hearts as hard in hell's great gloom  
As were they when they caused their doom.  
While passing o'er the motley throng  
Beheld I one I'd known for long—  
Long had I known her in that former state  
And wondered I much at this,—her fate.  
Curious to learn, I sought information  
Of the keeper of the book labeled "Damnation."  
There was her name in ink of red  
"Written with blood," so the keeper said.  
The blood of a heart so grievous sore  
It furnished that blood and could bleed no more.  
Beneath the name of her, once revered,  
Were written the charges 'gainst her preferred.  
"A craven at heart, with a witching smile  
She sent to the scaffold her lover—beguiled—  
Beguiled by her into a dream of bliss—  
The dream of one forbidden kiss.  
The kiss enraptured, she freely gave  
But, alas! false honor would she save.  
Reckless of grief to her lover, or shame.  
Falsely seeking a virtuous fame  
Decried she him unto her lord  
(Deceived and jealous country bard)  
As ravisher of virtue and low and base  
Too mean to dwell amid the race.  
Inflamed with passion, devoid of reason,  
Discerning not the woman's liaison  
A mob of fools, all false of justice  
Proclaiming each, himself quite lustless  
Enthroned the place and round and round



The hapless lover with cords was bound.  
With the scythe of death was he then smitten  
A sacrifice to the law, "Unwritten."  
Thus was she enthroned upon  
A pinnacle of fame and won renown  
With which, and a face of masked deceit,  
She her sins did oft repeat."  
Now—in hell,—her soul hypnotized  
By satan, the prince and father of lies.  
She's made to see with her distorted mind  
Her lovers pass by in continuous line.  
Hails she each with despairing wail  
And wonders and wonders why now they fail  
To comfort her there in hell's gloomy shade.  
For one by one they approach and fade  
Smiling a smile in derision and glee  
Gloating, she thinks, o'er her misery.  
Thus she's doomed for ages yet,  
Her soul to hunger in hell's black jet,  
Ever hoping, calling, crying  
For comfort, for love, undying, undying.  
A single love, by her once despised  
Is that for which she cries and cries.

The sights so sad near rended my brain  
And begged I of Freyja to return again  
Unto the earth once so despised  
But which now seemed near a paradise  
Beside those depths of misery and gloom  
Where evil man must meet his doom.  
Freyja, however, tho generally kind  
To lead me home, resolutely declined

Until—she explained—leading the way  
O'er legions of souls all filled with dismay.  
Haunted with visions of passion's regrets,  
And the tormenting dreams that evil begets—  
Until I beheld the torture in store  
For such of mankind as are wont to ignore  
The God-given counsels delivered to man  
To aid in lengthening his life's short span.  
Onward and onward we sailed through the murk  
In which, it seemed, vile devils lurked,  
Until, at length, we arrived at a glen  
Set apart by Satan for vicious men—  
Men born to lust—unconscionable brutes  
Who pay for their crimes by eating crime's fruits.  
Therein I saw a man of deceit  
Known on earth to be a cheat  
Yet so adept at hiding his liaisons  
He was deemed a Beau Brummel by maids of all  
fashion.  
King of good fellows and winner of hearts  
Cupid used him for sailing his darts.  
Thus, in league, did the deceitful twain  
Wound maidens by score so true was their aim,  
Mocking with laughter at the havoc wrought,  
The promises made and at once forgot.  
He sailed his life's craft on a river of glee  
And merrily maimed souls of sweet virginity.  
But the misery on earth all caused by him  
Is classed, in hell, as an unpardonable sin.  
And the torture he suffers is much the same  
As that endured by she of ill fame.  
The murderess of a heart as true as gold,  
Slain because her sins, he ne'er told.

In gay attire and with happy mien  
Passing by in an endless train—  
Or, so there are in his imagination  
Distorted to further his condemnation,—  
Damsels of beauty and rarest grace  
Passing through this most hideous place—  
Passing near him and he thinks, Alas!  
As each appears she'll be the last.  
In anguish then,—in agonized terror  
He pleads for release from the awful horror  
Of remaining alone with his darksome dreams  
For the endless years and then endless aeons  
To suffer alive tho seemingly dead  
According to the sentence by Satan read.

Those souls who'd sinned in less degree  
Were appointed to places of less misery.  
Some suffered only imprisonment  
Devoid alone of freedom's enjoyment.  
Some of these groups were laughable sights  
And, tho sad for them, did I laugh at their plight.  
A group of rhymsters I pitied but smiled at  
When beholding the torments they seemed to be  
    roiled at.  
Satan knew well of their many delusions  
And delighted in reading their foolish effusions.  
And hear them chide each one the other  
For the miserable jingles they had gotten together.  
He'd also placed them in a barren expanse  
Where nothing of beauty could their enjoyment  
    enhance  
But nevertheless they'd write and they'd scribble

Praising the beauty about them with dribble.  
They imagined themselves in flowery dells  
Listening, enraptured, at the chiming of bells  
From the steeples of churches of beauty and  
grandeur

Where with some loved one it pleased them to  
wander.

Or mayhap they'd dream of a rainbow near  
Whereon was seated, from an unknown sphere,  
Some idyllic creature, who'd beckon them nigh  
And plead for their love—"without which they  
would die."

Then would old Satan enjoy seeing their shame  
By causing, a moment, their minds to be sane.  
Some would then find themselves attempting to  
climb

A non-extant rainbow, while others would find  
Their loves and the churches and chiming church  
bells

To be but delusions of rhymsters in hell.

'Twas the last place, by Freyja's decree  
That she, in hell would show to me;  
And as we sailed to worlds above  
My mind, with vexing questions strove.  
Freyja, however, discerning my strife  
Concerning hell and death and life  
Proceeded to raise the dark clouds of doubt  
That encompassed my soul all round about  
And told me of mysteries undreamed before  
Of days to come and of days of yore.  
The cause and result of the actions of men

Of nations and worlds through space without end.  
She told me why the gods must rule  
And plant, on earth, that ancient school  
For which men long, to fill the void  
Caused through worship of a single God.  
And for this reason—yet not it alone—  
The gods again seek to enthrone  
Each himself above the earth  
Thus to guard, e'en from birth  
Each mortal. According to the hour and day  
Will determine which of the gods shall sway  
That mortal's footsteps throughout his life—  
Whether a road of ease or a path of strife.  
'Tis a law upon truth founded  
Tho too seldom here expounded—  
That when mortal's first breath's taken  
And to forces near does waken  
To harmony's laws does he respond  
And in that instant his future's found.”  
From the land of misery and shame,  
From the land of sin and pain,  
We swiftly together sped  
Through clouds of mist and rain  
Upward and upward again  
Swiftly to earth we fled.

The sight was a joy to the senses,  
(Hell has its recompenses)  
For now the earth seemed to me dearer.  
I longed with a longing of love  
As I gazed at it far, far above  
To embrace it,—The earth—oncenothing drearier.

Those realms wherein the gods held sway too  
frigid were  
Hela's home too much sorrow held too much woe  
and fear  
No longer had I desire within such realms to  
roam.  
The giants too uncouthly were and caused too  
great distress  
For one to eat of their wretched food or share  
alike their dress.  
Happiness welled within me when viewing my  
home sweet home.

In a forest of the northland— a forest dark as  
night—  
There is where we rested when at last we ceased  
our flight.  
Questioned I then of Freyja—What could her  
object be.  
Her answer was surprising—to me, an earthly  
man.  
Said she, "I'll introduce you to dear old Piper Pan  
Who dwells within the forest yet whom mortals  
fail to see."

Straightway then she signaled to a moth of  
brilliant hue  
Daintily sipping honey from a flower damp with  
dew,  
And bade it with a gesture to bring at once its  
mistress.

In just an instant more, to my great amaze,  
A nymph stood there beside me,—my mind was  
in a haze.  
In vain for speech I struggled—my wits were in  
distress.

'Twas the self same nymph I met before  
I with Freyja, aloft did soar.  
Her beauty all too glorious to be by pen described  
And think I, none could paint it, tho for ages tried.  
Not alone her beauty that filled my soul with  
pleasure  
Her grace and charm of manner were yet the  
greater treasure.  
Her eyes of soothing blackness, like rippling pools  
at night  
Were wells of power and mystery, and I'd tremble  
with delight  
When gazing in their depths and gain but just  
a glimpse  
Of wisdom hidden there and also mischief imps.

For a moment too I wondered anent the queer  
sensations—  
It seemed my flesh had clothed me and I felt my  
heart's pulsations.  
The nymph also seemed human rather than a  
wraith  
And Pan,—when he appeared—I swear by my  
faith—  
His hairy legs and cloven feet and likewise too  
his horns

Were very like a creature's of earthly creature born.  
And turning then to Freyja to seek an explanation  
I found that she'd deserted (to my consternation)  
The nymph however perceived  
The thoughts that kept me grieved  
And explained it was the nature  
Of gods, like earthly creature,  
(Or those of lesser birth)  
To be as men of earth.  
She also said I well might doubt  
I, to be, my flesh without.

Very soon indeed, was I made to feel at ease  
With dear old Pan the Piper and his my nymph  
of the trees.  
And immediately was taken to a dreamland place  
of joy  
Where first, was I made acquainted with little  
Cupid boy.  
Ever alert for mischief with bow and arrow too  
E'er I was aware he'd pierced me through and  
through.

The pain and the pleasure alternate so nearly  
equalized  
Bereft me of my senses and my speech was  
paralyzed.  
Then like a slave did I submit to this nymphian  
sorceress  
Who proved herself. like all her sex, a first class  
torturess.



With a string of promise unto the arrow tied  
Whose barb found lodgment and a safety place to  
hide  
Within my heart—I'd vainly thought was ada-  
mant  
Until the nymph attached the string, then—  
vanished my contentment!

From Cupid's bower she led me round and round  
Lashed unto her fateful string as tho some poor  
hound.  
Into a garden of fruits of various and many sizes  
Wandered we together where I met with strange  
surprises.

When beside the nearest tree, with fruit mis-  
shapen, laden,  
The nymph unloosed the string of promise and  
left me free as Adam.  
I thought perchance the fruit might bring me  
better luck  
And on tiptoes did I reach out, a single one to  
pluck.  
I grasped it tightly in my hand and wondered—  
shall I eat it?  
The nymph then nodded her consent and said,—  
"Perhaps you need it."  
I wondered at the mischief imps dancing in her  
eyes  
And when I'd bitten into it imagine my surprise—  
The peel as tough as rubber was filled with bitter  
gall

It strangled me near unto death—I thought I'd surely fall.

When at last I breathed again—of the tree I asked about

“Why, dear sir,” the nymph replied, “that’s the tree of doubt.”

Just then from out the tree, uncannily, these words were spoken

“Thou art a very foolish fellow and by that very token

Unless thou cease

To spoil thy peace

And permit love’s spell to be by doubting broken

Thou shalt the sport of fickle fortune be forever.

And tho thou seekest e’en for ages, shalt thou never

Know love’s sweet joy

But instead a base alloy

A counterfeit of Satan’s and sting unknown to Cupid’s quiver.”

“Aye, O well!” I murmured in distress,

“Knew I not the road was thus,

Yet, however, would I discover

More anent the lot of lover

Thus to warn quixotic man

’Gainst the nymphs of Piper Pan.”

Ere the words had left my lips

I knew I’d spoken quite amiss

Her eyes, in haughty scorn, flashed to me a danger.

Quickly then sought I, to mollify her anger.  
With speech most gentle forsooth  
I sought, her temper, to soothe.  
I told her 'twas but just a jest and nothing pleased  
me so  
As did, it thus, to roam with her and prayed that  
we might go  
And search for some adventure, to while away the  
time,  
To this did she assent and it seemed to ease her  
mind.

She then took up the string of promise to which  
she kept me tied  
Naught, could I, but follow her, no matter how I  
tried.  
She led me then adown a walk (a narrow little  
lane)  
Adorned one side with booths, some of which were  
plain  
And some of rich design on either side were stand-  
ing.  
One of these we entered, the sights were so com-  
manding  
It almost made me dizzy to view such glorious  
splendor.  
“And,” thought I, “Old Pan is rich, likewise a  
lavish spender.”

For here enclosed from every land and every  
clime  
Were growing fruits and flowers from every tree  
and vine.

Clustered about in merry mood were many tiny  
groups  
Of nymphs of rarest beauty with escorts eating  
fruits.  
In the midst of this rare scene was a group of  
dancers swaying  
To those weird rhythmic strains of music that old  
Piper Pan was playing.

The floor on which their feet were patting  
Was a sheet of gold soft as matting,  
Yet withal 'twas sufficiently firm  
To glide upon, and made me yearn  
To join the throng of dancers.

But the dance to me was entirely new  
And lacked I grace sufficient too;  
So stood aside  
And watched them glide—  
Conscious of their glances.

Straightway thence to a booth called Regret  
The nymph led me, where, in a mirror, I met  
The distorted features of my soul in remorse  
For things longed for yet forever lost.

A sight indeed to create disgust  
The sight of my soul writhing in dust  
Ashamed to acknowledge (tho knowing well)  
Its own sheer follies drove it to this hell.

A hell of torment, caused through fear,—  
The fear to claim all it held dear  
And grasp as was its God-given right,  
Those things which make a day of night.

While viewing myself thus distorted  
An awful voice from the mirror shouted,—  
“Behold thou, mortal, the distress and despair  
Bequeathed to one who did not dare—

Dared not grasp the best on earth  
Which, by right, is his since birth  
But yet was squandered and left to he,—  
He who dares and wills that good must be.

See not thou the nymph who leads thee  
Carest not that she were thine?  
Why submit to this her tyranny  
Aimlessly led as one quite blind?”

Berated I then myself a fool  
To be led about with a string and dart  
Quite as tho an inanimate tool  
Yet—, how could I free my stricken heart?

It ached with pain which yet was joy,  
For fateful promise which led me on  
Fused the pain to a pleasant alloy  
And bade forebodings all, begone.

And so, fascinated and enraptured  
I followed whithersoever she led me

Knowing quite well that my soul was captured  
And I questioned myself,—“Would she wed me?”

While thusly engaged at surmising  
And dreaming sweet dreams of the future  
We stopped at a tree of the devil’s devising  
Which required life’s blood for its nurture.

’Twas a tree most heavily laden  
With a fruit of great beauty and splendor  
And all who passed by it were bidden  
By a voice most charming and tender

To partake of the fruit of dear Hope  
So luscious and sweet to behold  
But which to the taste is as rope—  
Disappointing to both young and old.

Questioned I, then my fair captor  
Sought I, to learn of her why,  
Man must be an adapter  
To circumstance until he die?

“Why do his dreams turn to ashes?  
Why is his end but despair?  
What is it crosses his wishes?  
Why does Hope’s fruit seem so fair?”

Not by word did she answer me  
But hand in hand we forward went  
Unto a knarled and unkept tree  
Labeled most vividly—Ill-content.

A voice then whispered from within its branches  
"Partake of the fruit so dear to man  
Unlovely indeed, yet the taste entrances  
As does none other in the garden of Pan."

'Twas a luscious fruit, tho yet unsightly  
And as I ate, still more I craved  
Guessed I then (I think quite rightly)  
Discontent, is that which makes man most en-  
slaved.

Enslaved is man thro discontent  
And e'en tho hope is realized  
Discontent cries, "Illusionment,"  
And so all joys are mimimized.

The nymph then looked so wistfully—  
I wondered why 'twas so  
Until I found her telling me  
'Twas time that I should go.

Said she, "'Tis seldom that we meet with mortals  
here  
And I long to have you with us and talk to you  
and hear  
About the world wherein you dwell throughout  
your life's span  
For know you I am prisoner unto great Piper Pan.

"Not that he mistreats me that fain would I go  
But often I grow weary with the pomp of things  
you know.

And long to feel the thrill of mortal beings' warmth  
Such as I have noted they all possess on earth.

"Ah! such is the glory of the happiness they know  
(The burning kiss of passion 'twixt two lovers  
true)

That I've often sought to leave my decorous  
realms of grandeur

And become a mortal creature with e'en their  
lack of polished manner.

"For here, tho gay," she continued pensively and  
languid,

Her voice athrill with emotion until it slightly  
trembled

"Our joys are too ethereal and lack the human  
heart

So filled with joy and tenderness and Oh! Oh! the  
warmth,—

"The warmth of burning pleasure such as I have  
seen

"Twixt lovers true, hidden from their kind within  
the forest sheen

But, Ah me!" exclaimed she, her voice full of  
sadness,

"Pan refuses me permission and says my hopes  
are madness."

Then I told her of my sorrow thus to see her mourn  
Gently pleading that I aid her to leave her prison  
home.



I begged her to flee with me and declared to her  
my love

And boasted too, I feared not e'en the gods above.

Tho I'm sure my heart was quaking, boasting  
thus to her

Whom I was sure knew the gods filled me with  
fear.

However, I continued, and most passionately  
pleaded

Telling her 'twas courage only that she needed.

Yet I feared her knowledge of mortal man was  
meagre

Thus to praise them for their joys with such un-  
bounded eager

So I told her of their sorrows—How they love and  
hate

How their love is but seemly and that it, of which  
they prate

Is but a cloak for hiding devious ways for gaining

In a manner lawful (because devoid of maiming)

Those things they covet mostly—that belong unto  
a brother

Nor is there aught that's sacred 'twixt one another.

They prate of love for Christ, I said, and teach  
that his plan

Is the first and only one for each and every man

Yet, because one prays at eve while his brother  
prays at morn

Each unto the other says,—“Your worship is all wrong.”

And so they quarrel and bicker without the least  
of reason

Damn they each the other in each and every  
season.

“Tell me then, nymph,” with her I pleaded,  
“Hast thou the haunts of men visited and heeded.

Or is it not that thy knowledge of man consists  
Of what thou hast seen within the forest midst?”  
My words had clouded her pretty face  
A tiny frown on her brow made trace.

Puzzled and askance, a picture of woe—  
Wounded her heart, as by mortal blow.  
She answered me; doubting it seemed  
The truth of my words,—as if I’d blasphemed.

“True,” she answered, “I’m quite unallowed  
To visit those regions ’yond the forest’s shroud  
And the words you’ve spoken are a cruel blow  
To one whose learned to love mortals so.

“’Tis quite beyond all my conceiving  
That mortal could be so deceiving  
And why, I pray, can such misery be?  
O, shame! O, shame! that such can be.”  
She noted my surprise at this her confession  
Of such slight knowledge of man her possession,

And hastened at once to me to explain  
The cause of her ignorance for which she felt  
shame.

“All nymphs,” she said, “of Piper Pan  
Are held within bonds of the sacred plan  
As, too, the gods; tho with less restraint  
Yet, often they even voice a plaint.

“And so, sir mortal, ’tis as you’ve stated  
My knowledge, by you, was no doubt overrated.  
For all that I know of mortal man  
I have learned it here in the realm of Pan.

“But O, how my being has thrilled with joy  
(And, alas! my dreams are shattered now,)  
What joy I’ve known when mortals would appear  
Within the forest, my native sphere.

“For with accents sweet and voices athrill  
They bespeak their joy at sight of a rill;  
And chant they songs of each shrub and tree  
Their happiness unbounded! their lives so free!

“How often have I stood a pace or two aside,  
Watching happy lovers or perchance a groom and  
bride—  
Watching them embracing anon as they’d stroll  
And truly did their actions at times seem very  
droll.

“Then when they slumbered I have favored them  
with dreams

Just to keep them quiet and thus by that means  
Have I often lain beside them, nestled in their  
arms

Just to feel the pleasure of my body growing  
warm.

“For O!” she cried in anguish, “’tis that for which  
I pine

The warmth of mortal blood, denied to all divine;  
Our bodies frail and frigid,—transparent too to  
men

Feel not the heat of passion nor yet the love they  
ken.”

“Nymph, I interrupted, if thusly I can please  
Henceforth, I shall sleep, ever beneath the trees.  
But, pray tell me—Has it ever been my lot  
To share with such a beauty my lonely cot?

“And if I’ve been so favored—tell me of my  
dreams—

What the spell you wrought—tell me of the themes  
Did I dream of sunny climes or northlands  
And waken with a fever or chilled as Boreas’s  
hands?”

“No tales I tell to flatter sir,” she answered me,  
“But if perchance a nymph hath ever slept with  
thee

Thou couldst not dream of tropic homes.  
More like, ’twere frost disturbed thy bones.”

So thus at last I comprehended  
How my pleasant rest was oft' times ended  
Beneath the covers that should have kept me  
    warm  
When sleeping within the realms of Pan  
Where fragrant breezes so near to calm  
Seemed bent on causing some frigid harm.

However, was I not allowed much time  
For reflecting on those ills of mine  
Those wrongs I'd fancied to be Boreas's jesting  
Which, now I knew must have been  
Stolen warmth by nymphs of Pan  
Stealings made while I was in slumber resting.

For yet again did the nymph remind me  
That I should hasten to where Freyja'd find me.  
Thus to continue my journey as planned  
And ere I left (just to prove my love)  
I sought to embrace my nymphian dove  
And tried, a kiss, on her brow to emplant.

But she deftly escaped me and left me alone  
Fled she in fear and I heard her moan,  
As into the distance she vanished.  
And I feared that I'd wronged her  
Because of ill thots that thronged her  
Because of the love I'd have lavished.

Standing there in contemplation  
Of the strangeness of all creation,  
And wondering why this nymph had fled;

Who might have known, and did, no doubt,  
That I loved her only with a love devout.  
A voice from a near by tree then said,

“Why ponder thus o’er facts so patent  
If knowst thyself; ’tis most certain  
That shouldst thou love thou wouldst not attempt  
eluding  
The object of thy desires  
That causes thy passion’s fires  
To burn so brightly that all else is excluded.

But not like thee  
Can the female see  
And so acts contrariwise.  
But thou hast lost  
Both lover and host  
And must seek elsewhere a paradise.”

In vain I plead for the nymph’s return  
The voice but laughed to hear me mourn,  
And sadly, at last, turned I to flee.  
Haunting regrets and memories’ pains  
Occupied now my miseried brain  
And I longed for the void of an eternity.

The forest so dark, of giant trees  
Swayed lazily about in the mildest breeze  
And chanted a dismal dirge,  
While forward I, with miseries pent,  
Forlorn, forsaken, aimlessly went  
Until reaching at last the forest’s verge.

Where—joy of my heart! Sweet Freyja stood,  
And pleasantly greeted me—Freyja, the good.  
“Welcome sir!” she cried in tones so vibrant with  
cheer

That my heart grew gay instant and vanished  
all sorrow and fear.

But when I attempted recounting to her my tales  
of woe

She chided me for such gossip with just two words  
—“I know”

And forbade me to tell of my troubles and in  
truth made light of my sorrow

And told me to forget that at once for great was  
the work for the morrow.

Said she, “Prearest thou therefore and soothe thy  
mind with rest

A couch shall be brought forth at once,—one of  
the very best.”

So saying, Freyja called in some miraculous  
manner

A troop of minutest elves, each with a twig as  
banner.

I watched them each and all deposit their mighty  
portion

And when the task was finished was a bed as soft  
as the ocean.

I noted then also, with a smile quite slyly mine,  
She'd had the bed made distant—where the  
nymphs could never find.

For nymphs cannot emerge without the forest's  
shade,  
And I questioned of myself—"Could Freyja be  
afraid—  
Afraid that I'd lose slumber through some  
nymphan rogue  
Seeking warmth from the body of a mortal,  
'neath a robe?"

'Neath a robe of silken fibres woven from the trees  
By a myriad of little elfins who did it just to  
please  
The great and lovely Freyja—goddess of them all;  
Goddess of the great is Freyja, likewise goddess  
of the small.

I wondered too that a single bed was made—  
Freyja smiled derision when those my thots she  
read.  
But I less adept at divining the plans she had  
Determined then to question her tho I knew  
I risked my head.

So I asked most meekly where she intended  
sleeping  
Telling her 'twas irksome for elves to go a-seeking  
After fall of night for leaves for other couches  
Being too, too dangerous for them to carry torches.  
And I proffered her my couch, *all*, if she required  
"For," I concluded, "you also, must be tired."  
She looked at me as tho dismayed that I should  
thus aspire



To share my couch with one so great—with station  
so much higher.

Still, her happy sense of humor preserved me from  
extinction

Tho a million elfins laughed with her and made  
shame my great affliction.

“Mortal creature that thou art, I forgive thee  
thy delusion

But Freyja goes to sleep alone where e’en the gods  
tempt no intrusion.

“So sleep thou well nor let the nymphs disturb  
thee,

Thou, a holier love shalt find, ere long, to curb  
thee.”

Saying which, Freyja left me there alone  
Vanishing. Whither? I have never known.

Puzzled my soul and awearied of bone

I timidly crept to my bed,—alone.

Too wearied indeed to think or to ponder

O’er events of the day so fraught with such wonder.

And doubting my senses and fearing to venture

Contemplating at all concerning the future,

Oblivion I sought in the arms of Morpheus

Beloved of the weary! Holy son of Somnus.

Tho arising at dawn, Freyja was soon at my side

Leading the winged steed which she stated I  
should ride.

She bade me mount at once, saying, "We must hasten."

I murmured somewhat—discontent—because no food I'd eaten.

She scorned to heed my uncouth misbehavior,  
Saying, it was ill to think of food save as just a savior,

And then, with but the minutest gesture  
Bade my body to remain that thus it could not pester,—

Could not pester the flight for which she'd made arrangements

And off we flew together regardless of my arguments.

I regretted indeed the loss of my poor form of clay  
But Freyja assured its return later in the day.

It took but a scant hour for she and I to fly  
To where I first met her—within the desert dry.  
And there I met again those gods in feathered form

That I had feared before, were intent on doing harm.

But whom I met with pleasure now, nor feared I they at all

For royally had they treated me, each of them and all.

They'd arranged the place for comfort since last I was there

A bower of beautiful trees,—vine covered everywhere.

A spring of crystal water gushed forth from the hill

The fruit of some great power—someone's mighty will,—

Arranged about were seats threaded with spun gold,

Through a curtain of spraying water almost icy cold,

The air was passing alway, which made it pure and sweet,

A carpet of velvet grass grew now beneath our feet;

A table, too, was there laden with delicious dishes,  
Wine and fruit galore, to satisfy our wishes.

When the greetings were all over 'twixt Freyja and her friends

They began cajoling her anent her mission's ends  
Accused they her of seeking to win a mortal's love  
(Being discontent with all immortals from above.)

Some clamored for the privilege of being an escort

Thus her plans of conquest to, in a measure, thwart.

He who clamored most was no doubt a god of splendor

Tho poorly could I judge, (he in guise of gander.)

Tho, yet his voice and manner of a most courageous kind  
Proved a vigorous body as well as brilliant mind.  
I could illy keep from smiling at the oddity of the sight  
And at length I told to Freyja that I thought it wasn't right

For such gods as they to thus parade  
Before one whose acquaintance each of them had made.  
"Why, I'm surprised!" Freyja exclaimed to me,  
"Lovest thou not the birds? Thinkest thou them unlovely?"

"Nay," I answered, "but according to a mortal's mind  
A bird is lovely only when possessed of a bird's mind.  
But rather 'tis incongruous and seems to them absurd  
To hear the voice of humans spoken by a bird."

"'Tis ill that thou shouldst criticise," she gently cautioned me,  
"But," she then continued, "If our dress offend thee—  
Just to make you happy and contented in your mind  
The gods shall appear to thee as beings of your kind."

So, behold! When I looked again  
The gods appeared as supermen  
And Freyja too became a girl  
Like unto those who fill and fool the world.

I, too, received my form of clay—  
How it arrived I cannot say  
When all were bidden to sit at the table  
To relieve it of its burden as much as we were able.

While round the bounteous board we sat and each  
with the other jested  
The gods the merrier grew, the longer that they  
feasted.

For an hour or more in jovial mood they gossiped,  
While I wondered about their dignity—fearing  
they had lost it.

At length however they changed their mood and  
began to question me,  
And also tell about their plans, and I listened to  
all attentively.  
Thor spoke first, and tho in kindly tone, I was  
indeed affrighted  
Because of the weirdness of his voice—this god  
so very mighty.

Said he, "Sir Mortal, what is thine choice? Who  
wilt thou in future serve,  
This god whom none hath seen nor wilt commun-  
ion have

With mortals who dwell on earth, nor wilt their  
pleadings heed  
Nor seems will serve another than he who's born  
to greed?

"This God whom christians claim, 'The just  
and only one,'  
Who yet permits on earth, the rankest injustice  
done,—  
I, who am master of intrigues and wars  
And delight, in common with my companion  
Mars

"To behold the heroism of mortals upon a  
battlefield  
Would yet, to the cry of orphans some pity yield.  
Have I not beheld, within the recent past  
Widows and orphans in millions for days not  
break their fast.

To me, this God of whom christians prate  
Appears, not a God of love but rather one of hate,  
One who jeers at sorrows and finds pleasure in  
the pain  
Of all who are not of kingly birth; and delights in  
the heaps of slain.

When we were overthrown by the power of the  
goodly Christ  
Took we our punishment unmurmuringly: 'Twas  
the fault of a great one's vice.

One whose power grew so great here upon this  
earth  
That mortals still do worship him—even from  
their birth.

I speak of he called Mammon, the youngest god  
of all  
Who sits alone at table in yonder end of hall.  
Who sits alone at table nor joins us in our feasts  
Lest he lose a drop of wine or a morsel of his meats.

We seek now to dethrone him and leave him on  
earth to dwell  
For such ungainly creatures are fit for but earth  
or hell.  
Therefore, ere thou leavest, to judge him thou  
art asked,  
After the feast the trial shall be, altho 'twere an  
irksome task.

Thereby, ye see, sir mortal, how just we shall be  
The rewards of every mortal, likewise his destiny  
Shall be granted according to the virtues that  
are his or hers  
Therefore, again I ask, sir mortal, who wilt thou  
in future serve?"

"Truly, Thor," I answered, "the sights I've  
seen of late  
Together with the kindness that you've shown  
Makes me long very much to partake  
Of the bounties of such a throne.

But then 'twere a task to a mortal most severe  
To break allegiance and all ties sever  
From that God he's been taught to fear  
And for whom the claim is made there is none  
other.

And yet thy accusations seem to me most just  
For well I know of the miseries endured through-  
out this life  
But we've been promised compensation when  
our bones are turned to dust  
And the compensation greatest to him of greatest  
strife."

"So indeed!" the great Thor replied, "to some  
extent 'tis true  
But compensation, only will be given unto him  
to whom it's due  
To him who is unschooled in the workings of the  
soul  
Will at last find compensation is not paid in gold.

"And the struggle must continue and he whose  
soul's so sordid  
That it cannot harmony's laws comprehend  
Will find himself unable, when the soul is free to  
soar,  
To keep his soul intact and 'twill be lost forever-  
more.

"Like unto the dumb beasts his soul will separ-  
ate—



Divide into atoms and reach the primal state—  
And he who'll be rewarded and rewarded quite  
the most  
Will be the one whose soul is farthest 'bove the  
bestial hosts."

"Thy words are quite confounding," at length I  
answered Thor,  
"The Christ we love taught to us very much the  
same.  
And it's strange to me to hear such words from  
thou, the god of war,  
And I'm much inclined to follow thee till at least  
I find it vain."

A resounding cheer rang out while high their  
glasses held,  
The gods and goddesses each (their faces shone  
delight)  
Greeted me their first convert, while heavenly  
music knelled  
"Death to Christianity,—mankind's most wretch-  
ed night."

"Hark! ye gods!" I then explained, intoning  
ridicule,  
We mortals think,—and, too, with the best of  
reason  
That we've progressed far more since we've  
followed Christ's good rule.  
To deny it were but folly and to truth attempted  
treason.

And surely the world's less wretched than 'twas  
in your day  
And the night of which your elfins sing and chant  
Is less wretched, is it not, than when ye held sway?  
Lest I've been mistaught your statements are  
but cant."

"Nay," the gods then answered me, "quite true  
that misery thrived,  
But the reason's not the same today as when we  
lived.  
Wretchedness then was born through fear of  
tyrants' might  
And man would not so fear today except they're  
taught 'tis right.

"Wretchedness today is caused alone through  
fear,  
They're taught 'tis wrong to seek their own—all,  
all that's dear.  
Hypocrites, who are your rulers, threaten with  
the wrath  
Of that God they know, is but a fear inspiring  
myth.

"And so men languish in chains of shame,  
Chains of superstition, the chains of poverty and  
ill fame.  
Once remove their cause for fear—so vile,  
And no longer will they, to masters be servile.

“And that’s the work for thee, according to our  
plan,  
Eradicate the curse of fear from all your fellow-  
man.  
Teach them to praise the gods of poesy who now  
will be supreme.  
We gods reward the valiant and make their lives  
serene.

“Go thou first and build a shrine to the immortal  
thou lovest most,  
Build it not of pretentious size to awe the vulgar  
hosts.  
Use not thou, rare stones but rather vines and  
trees,  
Build thou it to suit thine self, ’twill the gods  
most please.

“Seek ye then our aid and all the gods shall foster  
All thy plans and cause that they mature. Thou  
shalt truly prosper.  
When your disciples are numbered by scores, as  
truly they shall be—  
Permit them each to choose his own divinity.”

Our attention was now directed to Mammon,  
where at his lonely feast  
(A sorry aspect he, uncouth in truth, in manner,)   
He smacked his lips in satisfaction much as  
might a beast  
And swept aside his dishes all, creating a noisy  
clatter.

With frowning brow and eyes downcast,  
No word of greeting for his friends at board  
The length of the room he shuffled past,  
Apparently dreaming of his gold mad hordes.

But ere he traversed the length again—  
Amidst a tense and ominous silence,—  
Thor arose and called his name  
And begged the pleasure of an audience.

All were then to seats, in a semi-circle arranged,  
Led forth to try a god whose company no longer  
was desired  
Because of his selfish manner he had made him-  
self estranged;  
In the murk of greed and conquest his sordid self  
was mired.

I, by a god, was ushered unto the judge's seat,  
While Mammon sat quite near,—ill humor was  
his mien—  
No jurors there nor witnesses as with gods 'twas  
meet  
Since none would stoop to an untruth and thus  
his honor stain.

Then Thor at once began the sins of Mammon to  
state,  
He told of all his grievous faults, that were to  
them at least,  
So great they could no longer his presence tolerate  
And henceforth he to them could be but an out-  
cast.

Said he, "We have with us a mortal,—one of the unbribed—

One who's not your victim and belongs not to your tribe.

This mortal shall pronounce your sentence and relieve the gods of shame

Should the sentence pronounced upon thee befit not thy fame.

"God Mammon," he continued, "the charge that's most against thee

Is the crime we gods call greatest. Thou art charged with hypocrisy,

By wiles that are deceitful hast thou brought shame to man

No longer seek they only to follow the sacred plan.

"Their souls are seared with selfishness, a trait that thou hast taught

Themselves and thou occupy now practically all of their thoughts

These things we gods have noted and beside an equal crime

Thou hast sought to exclude their worship from every shrine but thine.

"Therefore your presence, Mammon, in our realm is no longer wished

Thou shalt henceforth be banished forever from our midst.

But, yet art thou given, before this mortal judge  
A chance to plead thy cause, lest his ruling be unjust."

Astonished to stupefaction for a moment Mam-  
mon sat—  
Contortions of his face bespoke the mingled pains.  
Then slowly to his feet arose, discarding a silken  
wrap,  
Raised his head in hauteur, his lips curled in dis-  
dain.

His voice so full of scorn—in every tone he jeered  
At this that was to him a punishment illy meted.  
While I, appointed judge, for my welfare really  
feared  
Lest perchance he'd think himself, by me illy  
treated.

Yet my fears were groundless for he heeded me  
as a nonentity,  
He spoke alone to his former friends who now at  
last were foes.  
Said he, "Ye gods, I'm flattered by this your  
enmity.  
It indeed, your fear of me, more than aught else  
shows.

"My power, indeed, hath grown so great  
That jealousies now consume thee,  
And to check that power thou art too late  
For 'twill, for ages, rule without me.

"Thou mayest slay me if you will  
But I defy ye all; gods and men and even fate.

My power shall rule all mankind still,  
My spirit will thrive e'en 'gainst thy hate.

"During all the centuries of our confinement,  
With a promise of untold wealth,  
Hath a myriad of elves, in my employment,  
Been teaching in honor and in stealth.

"The glories of Mammon the king,  
King of the gods! King o'er the hearts of men,  
All to the altar of Mammon bring  
Both honored and steeped in sin.

"Their hearts of evil, hearts of good,  
Tears of sorrow and tears of shame,  
Their very souls are Mammon's brood  
Forever and ever 'twill be the same.

"Tho despised am I by honored friends,  
And alone must seek my comrades  
'Mongst evil elves where all beauty ends  
Tho I sink now to the slime of things most sordid

"Yet will I, in triumph and with glee,  
Perceive the tribute paid for ages yet to come—  
All honor from mankind will still be paid to me  
Though clouds of shame, henceforth, at this my  
fatal doom.

"Keep me bowed with grief and in solitude to  
mourn—

To mourn the passing pleasures of the fellowship  
of my kind  
Yet, tho of all the glory of life with thee I'm shorn  
There'll be sweet revenge in knowing I am loved  
best by mankind."

The speech of Mammon ended 'twas meet that  
I should speak  
And let be known to him the future he must seek.  
Where his future days be spent, whither he should  
roam—  
Hastily I concluded that the earth should be his  
home.

So I said, "God Mammon, because of your love  
of self  
And the curse you've wrought on man (their  
cursed love of pelf)  
I'd sentence you to dwell in the darkest depths of  
hades  
Were I not most fearful lest ye teach those rene-  
gades,—

Those renegades of Satan's—hapless sons of  
pride—  
The cunning of your craft and cause them to im-  
bibe  
Of the cup that's brought to mortals shame  
And curse them, too, with the loathing lust for  
gain.

Therefore, god Mammon, a more bitter penance  
I view



One that will more greatly goad the heart of you,  
No other realm shall be given unto thee for conquest,  
Your evil work must cease, henceforth shalt thou rest.

Thou shalt henceforth in idleness forever roam  
the earth  
Your might and power impotent as the infant at  
its birth.  
And tho your spirit, as boastfully you contend,  
May yet taint humankind for time without an  
end.

Yet shall ye suffer as your victims (unsated ever  
and ever)  
Thirsting for the power from which, I now, thee  
sever.  
So, now, farewell, god Mammon,—I speak for  
your friends as well,  
A life on earth no doubt you'll find more irksome  
than one in hell."

When the gods heard me pronounce Mammon's  
doom  
And he, the champion dispenser of gloom,  
Had taken an early departure,  
A sigh of relief was echoed about  
And a cheer of praise for me rang out  
At choosing for him such fortune.

Then hastened each from his tribune seat  
To gaze upon Mammon's forlorn retreat,  
Wending his way o'er the desert wastes.  
And they felt remorse at their kindred's fall  
For, tho he loved them not at all,  
Their hearts were saddened by his loss of place.

Their hearts were saddened by this the sight  
Of a god so great in power and might  
Reduced to the plane of a mortal soul—  
No longer sped he as a bird in flight  
Carried by the force of his wondrous might—  
But wearily plodded to reach a goal.

At length we noted that the day fast waned  
And much indeed there yet remained

Of converse concerning the future  
And hastened we again to the banquet board  
Where unseen elves the rare wine poured  
For each goddess and her suitor.

Soon again supreme joy reigned,  
The glasses tinkled merrily.  
Glorious ladies and gods unaged.  
Spoke their minds unwarily.

Freyja, the fair  
Her sunlit hair  
Glistening as burnished gold,  
Spoke with candor

And told of the grandeur  
Of the gods in the days of old.  
And filled with glee  
She confided to me  
Their happiness in store again  
When communion with men  
Was restored again  
And unchallenged they should reign.

Yet she chilled my soul  
When at length she told  
Of the changes in store for women,  
Declaring that they  
In the future may  
Implace themselves rulers of men.

She told me then  
That while I was with Pan  
She hastened away to read women's hearts  
That she might know  
Whether of weal or woe  
In the future to them she'd impart.

And declared then with fervor  
That she'd confer greater favor  
Than ever they'd known of before—  
She'd grant them more beauty  
And considered it her duty  
To aid them in winning world power.

“And tho I must grieve  
At what I perceive

In store for them in the great distance  
'Twere folly for me  
To attempt to decree  
That their ambition be shorn of persistence.

“But, enough! Be it said  
That ere thou art dead  
Thou shalt see woman rule  
Tho they bring disaster  
By being thy country's master.  
Experience alone will be their school.

“For years by the score  
Shall they maintain their power  
And with ruthlessness born of vanity  
Scorn to be considerate—  
Until vengeance, born of hate,  
Will drive man from his inanity.

“And the shackles of patience  
And chains of submission  
By a storm of rebellion he'll break—  
He'll no longer be gracious  
Nor filled with compassion  
For she who should be his mate.

“But by brutish means  
To gain selfish ends  
Once more he'll be lord over women  
Tho acknowledged as fiends  
By foes and by friends—  
Not shame shall detract from their venom.

“And women again shall be  
Dominated by force of strength  
(Save those too proud to submit)  
And they shall be made to flee  
To a mateless commonwealth  
And there from the world exit—

“Exit from the world alone,  
Martyrs to ideals too great  
For the myriads of selfish men,  
Heart-broken with wishes for home  
Hungering to the last for the mate  
Without which they'd as well not have been.

“Then will man retrograde  
Declaring it a useless task  
To climb ever upward to meet—  
Not the cherished dreams of Arcade,  
Not the surcease they now ask,—  
But ever and ever defeat.

“And women shall bear the blame  
And burdens will be heaped upon them  
The same as in ages past.  
Their souls will be seared with shame  
At the contempt shown them by men  
And their beauty and souls will wither before  
that burning blast.”

Such words did Freyja say  
Ere she said to me farewell.  
And I listened and believed it all  
For pride and scorn is a woman's way  
Whenever they fare too well  
And thus have they caused great nations' fall.























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